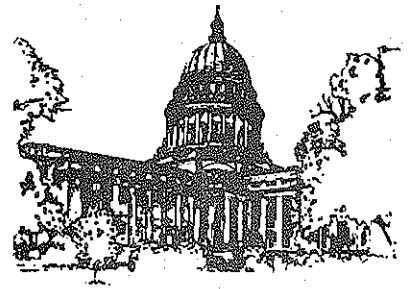


MARY WILLIAMS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 87TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Committees: Property Rights (Chair) • Tourism, Recreation and
State Properties (Vice Chair) • Natural Resources • Agriculture
Forestry • Rural Economic Development • Rules Committee



April 19, 2007

Mr Chair, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for holding a hearing on this bill, AB 230.

This issue was brought to my attention first by Representative Pocan who had heard about this issue from legislators in other states.

Working with John Bauman, better known to many of you as "Bowzer" from the hit oldies rock group Sha Na Na, we drafted legislation that will protect consumers and protect recording artists as well.


This bill is rather simple. It makes it a state crime to pose as a music group that you are not. Recently, entertainment groups have had their recordings and performances hijacked by imposters. In one case a group of bands formed an act together pretending to be a reunion of the Platters, Coasters, and Drifters. In reality, this act did not have a single authentic member from any of the groups. Consumers who went to see the Platters, Coasters, and Drifters were cheated. The **real** members of the Platters, Coasters, and Drifters were cheated as well.

I believe that if you pay to see a certain group, then that is the group you should be seeing, not some posers pretending to be that group. Although artists can already sue groups for fraudulence, they do not have the resources to go into every state where their act may be getting ripped off in order to prosecute the criminals who are doing this. This bill will allow Wisconsin's law enforcement to prosecute bands who would act fraudulently.

When drafting the bill, we were careful so that it would still allow tribute performances as long as they are called tributes. It will also allow bands that have legally purchased the trademark of a band to play as that band. It will simply go after the bad actors. A similar version of it has passed into law in 9 states and we hope Wisconsin will be the 10th.

The bill is a win-win. It protects consumers and it protects the artistic property of musical acts. I hope you will give it your support.

I would like to thank John Bauman, Representative Pocan, and Senator Coggs for their help with this legislation.


Representative Mary Williams
87th Assembly District